

Cheers, Jeers, And Tears

Have you ever been to a sporting event (especially hockey or football) where they make a big deal when the players come out? If you have the right seats, you can see them in the tunnel. You can anticipate their arrival. If you see the home team you start to get hyped, cheer, jump, shout.

If you see the other team you may start to boo them. Either way, there is this great anticipation, this waiting, expecting of their arrival.

It all leads up to what will happen when they take the ice or field. How will you react?

Have you ever thought about how you would react if you saw Jesus coming? It's happened before, and it's going to happen again! Do you anticipate His arrival? What will come out of you when you see Him coming?

Today we look back at Palm Sunday, the day we call the Triumphal Entry. It was a day of celebration as Jesus came to Jerusalem riding on a donkey.

Luke 19:28 (NKJV)

When He had said this, He went on ahead, going up to Jerusalem.

Jesus went on ahead...what an amazing picture. Jesus, the Good Shepherd, leading His flock on this dangerous journey that was about 17 miles with a steady upward elevation (3000 feet) of rough, rocky roads.

"It was far better that he should go first than that they should, for the disciple is never more out of place than when he outruns his Master."

~ Charles Spurgeon

A true follower follows, and a true leader leads. And it's so important that as a child of God, we follow Jesus. Because when you find yourself on a difficult path, there's great comfort knowing that you are not alone, and Christ has already gone before you. He has overcome the world!

Luke 19:29-34 (NKJV)

And it came to pass, when He drew near to Bethphage and Bethany, at the mountain called Olivet, that He sent two of His disciples, 30 saying, "Go into the village opposite you, where as you enter you will find a colt tied, on which no one has ever sat. Loose it and bring it here. 31 And if anyone asks you, 'Why are you loosing it?' thus you shall say to him, 'Because the Lord has need of it.' "

32 So those who were sent went their way and found it just as He had said to them. 33 But as they were losing the colt, the owners of it said to them, "Why are you losing the colt?"

34 And they said, "The Lord has need of him."

This exchange leaves me with a lot of questions...

How did He know exactly where this colt would be?

How did He know no one had sat on it?

How did He know the owners would just let them have it?

How did He know the guys He sent would actually carry out the plan?

Church this wasn't a big bunch of luck. It wasn't a coincidence. It was Jesus, Messiah, the One whom through all things were created and without Him nothing was made that was made. He's all knowing. He's God!

This journey is a journey where He really starts to reveal who He is in ways He never had before!

But these guys that He sent, popular belief is that it was Peter and John. This is who Jesus sent ahead to prepare the passover meal. They were 2 of the 3 in His inner circle along with James.

But they were also 2 of the 3 who were later with Jesus in the garden and fell asleep while He prayed...how did these guys go donkey jacking?

It's simple, men aren't always up for late night talks in the dark...but they're always up for adventure and a little danger!

How did it work out? They go, they find exactly what Jesus said, where Jesus said, and they are questioned about it and they said exactly what Jesus told them to say "*the Lord had need of him*" ...absolute obedience...

Man, can I tell you that when you have absolute obedience to the Lord, that there's no risk. You're guaranteed the exact outcome that He wants. There was NOT A CHANCE that these owners were going to refuse giving the colt. Because they did what Jesus told them to do.

"The Lord had need"...I look around this room this morning. And as I look at every single person in this place...I can say to you, "the Lord has need"...He has need of something that YOU can provide...

He created YOU with certain gifts and talents to do Kingdom work. He put you in this place, you are an American, and Illinoian, mother, father, brother, sister, child, friend to someone...

And He sees you. He knows what you are capable of and what those around you are in need of...

The Lord has need...need of you, to do His work! What do you say to Him this morning?

The colt owners gave up something very valuable...why? Because the Lord had need of it!

Mark 11:7-10 (NKJV)

Then they brought the colt to Jesus and threw their clothes on it, and He sat on it. 8 And many spread their clothes on the road, and others cut down leafy branches from the trees and spread them on the road. 9 Then those who went before and those who followed cried out, saying:

“Hosanna!

‘Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord!’

10 Blessed is the kingdom of our father David

That comes in the name of the Lord!

Hosanna in the highest!”

I can picture the excitement of the crowd, they have been waiting for God’s promised Messiah who would save them. The King is finally here! No more Roman oppression, our King is here to save us and to set up His kingdom and rule on the earth!

That is what they were expecting. They see the signs, the promises being fulfilled, the Savior is here!

They roll out the ancient times, poor man’s red carpet, laying their coats on the road, cutting down palm branches and laying them down as well.....honoring the coming King!

They were showing a royal tribute to the Christ. Praising the one who had taught with authority, healed the sick, raised the dead, and was coming to save!

The people begin quoting multiple psalms and shouting HOSANNA....meaning SAVE NOW.

Can you imagine this? I picture the day when Jesus returns for us. We have the prophecies, we know what to expect....and when we see it begin to unfold, we are going to be pumped! Hooping and hollering, jumping and dancing....oh there will be excitement in His people on that day.

On Palm Sunday, the people were going all out, celebrating, cheering, shouting, HOSANNA, HOSANNA!

CHEERS

See Jesus was being celebrated as He was coming to town. But what you might not realize is that many of those who celebrated were those who had seen the miracles...

John 12:17-18 (NKJV)

Therefore the people, who were with Him when He called Lazarus out of his tomb and raised him from the dead, bore witness. 18 For this reason the people also met Him, because they heard that He had done this sign.

This man raised the dead! He heals the sick! He casts out devils!

I mean who wouldn't want to be a part of the squad rolling into town?

But why were these people cheering? Why were they shouting Hosanna?

Some of them didn't even know who He was!

Matthew 21:10-11 (NKJV)

And when He had come into Jerusalem, all the city was moved, saying, "Who is this?" 11 So the multitudes said, "This is Jesus, the prophet from Nazareth of Galilee."

I believe a lot of the cheers were people joining in because they wanted a good time! People like a reason to get excited and get a little crazy.

We've seen a parade of old cars coming down route 40 before. All of the sudden there are cars in the church parking lot and my neighbors driveways and people are getting out and watching. And I'm clueless, no idea what's going on. So I walk outside and join in. This is cool, people are honking their horns. You get caught up, checking things out.

I imagine many of these people like that...walk up on the Jesus parade with people shouting and the mass of followers getting bigger and bigger. And the more people join the more people cry Hosanna...

LORD SAVE....SAVE NOW....it seems like the message is right! But the heart is wrong...See they weren't crying out to be saved from sin...but to be saved from man (Rome).

And this is the issue with each of us today. Church what we need is saving from sin not from circumstances...

I don't believe for a second that Jesus, while riding that donkey and fulfilling OT prophecy of the coming Messiah, I don't believe He was just soaking up all the cheers like sunshine. I don't see Him doing a little Miss America wave and smiling ear to ear.

Although He was in a sense being honored and recognized, they didn't recognize why He was there.

JEERS

Luke 19:39-40 (NKJV)

And some of the Pharisees called to Him from the crowd, "Teacher, rebuke Your disciples."

40 But He answered and said to them, "I tell you that if these should keep silent, the stones would immediately cry out."

The Pharisees were religious leaders, they were more focused on strict observance of the law, ceremonies, and traditions that they couldn't even see the Savior they learned so much about was right in front of them.

They wanted Jesus to quiet His people, make them stop, this is not what we think is right! There were probably no people that knew the scriptures as well as the Pharisees....yet they didn't even recognize Him.

In 2019 65% of US adults claim to be Christians (down 12% from 2009) according to PewForum.org. And also in 2019 they found that church membership in the US was at an all time low (before covid).

But 85% of Americans said yes to "Do you believe in God?"

Can I tell you that people lie on polls? I think we have a lot of people that "Believe in God" or that "identify as Christians" but they aren't born again. They haven't met Jesus.

Can I tell you that church attendance isn't a Covid problem? Sure there are some using that excuse and it's time to come back...it's safer here than it is at Walmart, Casey's, or Joe's. Get out of your PJs and get back to church. "The Lord has need..."

But most others just think they have everything figured out on their own...well so did the Pharisees and there will be more of them in hell than in heaven. Do you KNOW JESUS?

Jesus heard the cheers, He heard the jeers, and they both brought Him to tears.

Luke 19:41-42 (NKJV)

Now as He drew near, He saw the city and wept over it, 42 saying, "If you had known, even you, especially in this your day, the things that make for your peace! But now they are hidden from your eyes.

Jesus looked at the city through tears. He had sent prophets before Him. He had worked miracles. Nothing seemed to wake them up to their need for salvation from their sin.

This word for wept in the Greek is klaio (klah-yo) meaning deep agony, weeping and sobbing, wailing out loud.

Church this wasn't Jesus shedding a tear, this was His heart breaking at the sight of the cheers and jeers of all of the people who failed to receive Him for who He really is.

And as He rides on this donkey, weeping, sobbing, wailing, He knows they will soon reject Him as their Messiah and King even if now they show this brief moment of acceptance.

So what about you? Have you been cheering from the sidelines for Jesus to save you from our government, from covid, from circumstances...have you missed the reason He came?

Are you cheering for Him to save you from these temporary things when He came to give you so much more...everlasting life!

Or are you one that thinks you've got it all figured out, you've got this on your own. Don't you know that He has need of you? That if you say you belong to Him then your life is not your own because you've been bought with a price?

If we could just recognize Him as Jesus.....Name above all names, King of kings, Lord of Lords, Son of God, Prince of peace, wonderful Counselor, God Almighty!

If people could just bow down and surrender all that they are to Him. Welcoming our King, calling Hosanna.....Hosanna.....

Could we be like those in John 12 that came and said, "Sir, we wish to see Jesus."

Today you could make a decision to move Jesus from tears or weeping to tears of joy.

Salvation, Repentance, Baptism...The Lord has need of you!